



## DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221  
Telephone: (804) 367-2323 Fax: (804) 367-2391

### PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM

#### HISTORIC DISTRICT

An historic district is defined as a significant concentration of buildings, structures, or sites that are united historically and aesthetically by plan or physical development. The following constitutes an application for preliminary consideration of eligibility for the nomination potential of a historic district for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This does **not** mean that the district is being nominated to the registers at this time. Rather, it is being evaluated to determine if it qualifies for such listings. Applicants will be notified of the staff's and the State Review Board's recommendations.

Contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Archivist to determine if previous survey material for this proposed district is on file, and if the district has been previously evaluated by DHR. Obtaining previously recorded information could save a significant amount of time in preparing this Preliminary Information Form (PIF). The archivist may be reached by phone at (804) 482-6102, or by email at [Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov). The archivist will also give you the address of the regional office to which you should send your completed PIF materials.

Please type this form and, if additional space is needed, use 8½" x 11" paper. If an electronic version of this PIF is available, it would be helpful if it could be submitted on a disc, or via email to the archivist. Note: All submitted materials become the property of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and will not be returned.

**Photographs:** Please provide at least four (4) **color or** black-and-white (B&W) photographs of general streetscapes and four (4) color or B&W photographs showing a sample of individual buildings within the proposed district. The inclusion of photographs is essential to the completion of this application. **Without photographs, the application cannot be evaluated.** Photographs should be labeled on the reverse side in soft pencil or china marker (not with adhesive labels), and are not to be mounted or affixed in any way.

**Digital Images:** In addition to the images printed on photographic paper, digital images, if available, should be submitted in TIF or JPEG format and can be included on the same disc as the PIF.

**Maps:** Please include two (2) maps showing the location of the proposed district:

- A copy of a USGS Quad map with name of county/city printed on the map and with the name of the proposed district indicating its location (sections of USGS Quadrangle maps can be printed free of charge from <http://store.usgs.gov> and hand-labeled to mark property boundaries or location), and
- A map showing a closer picture of the proposed boundaries with street names and/or routes and possible building footprints would also be helpful. Please include a "North" arrow, date, and "Not to Scale" on this map.

Before submitting this form, please make sure that you have included the following:

- Section of labeled USGS Quadrangle map
- Proposed district boundary map
- 4 labeled color or B&W general photos
- 4 labeled color or B&W individual building photos
- Completed Resource Information Sheet, including
  - Applicant contact information and signature
  - City or county official's contact information

Thank you for taking the time to submit this Preliminary Information Form. Your interest in Virginia's historic resources is helping to provide better stewardship of our cultural past.

# Virginia Department of Historic Resources

## PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the proposed district for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the district could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

<b>General Property Information</b>		For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 108-0056	
District Name(s):	Grove Street Area - Danville (Old West End) Historic District Boundary Expansion		
District or Selected Building Date(s):	1830 -1940	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post	Open to the Public? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Main District Streets and/or Routes:	Grove Street, Chestnut Place, Jefferson Avenue, Ross Street, Holbrook Street, Chambers Street	City: Danville	Zip: 24541
County or Ind. City:	Danville (ind. city) USGS Quad(s): Danville		

<b>Physical Character of General Surroundings</b>	
Acreage: 21	Setting (choose one): <input type="checkbox"/> City <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor
<p>Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features/Streetscapes: The study area is situated between the Danville Historic District (108-0056), to the east, and the Holbrook-Ross Historic District (108-0180), to the west. It includes Grove Street, Jefferson Avenue, Chestnut Place, Chambers Street, Holbrook Street (100 block), and Ross Street (100 block). Grove Street is situated on a hill that slopes to the east, down to a gully covered with thick vegetation. A steep, undeveloped slope is located west of Ross Street. The Old Grove Street Cemetery, the oldest municipal cemetery in the city, is located within the study area boundary. The residential lots developed with standard setbacks, lined with sidewalks and curbs. Portions of the study area feature granite curbing and brick sidewalks.</p>	
Ownership Categories:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal

<b>General District Information</b>	
What were the historical uses of the resources within the proposed district?	
Single Dwelling, Multiple Dwelling, Secondary Structure, Church, Specialty Store, Cemetery	
What are the current uses?	Single Dwelling, Multiple Dwelling, Secondary Structure, Church, Specialty Store, Cemetery, Business, Vacant
Architectural styles or elements of buildings within the proposed district:	Colonial Revival, Queen Anne, Dutch Colonial, Second Empire, Italianate, Gothic Revival, Prairie School, Craftsman
Architects, builders, or original owners of buildings within the proposed district:	J. Bryant Heard
Are there any known threats to this district? Neglect, Demolition	

**General Description of District:** (Please describe building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district and a general setting and/or streetscape description.)

The Grove Street study area is situated west of Main Street, just beyond the grand houses of Millionaires Row. The study area is almost exclusively residential and boasts a collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century homes. The oldest homes are located along Grove Street, which forms the spine of the study area. The study area also includes Chestnut Place and Chambers Street, as well as portions of Holbrook Street, Ross Street, and Jefferson Avenue. There are 61 primary resources located within the study area. All but one was built between 1930 and 1940. While single-family dwellings predominate, there are also examples of duplexes and apartment buildings. Non-residential resources are limited to a cemetery, a church, and a neighborhood grocery store.

The oldest resource in the study area is the Old Grove Street Cemetery, which was established ca. 1830. It is enclosed by a fieldstone and granite wall, penetrated by two entrance gates along Grove Street. The cemetery contains over 135 graves. Burial plots, mausoleums, monuments, and individual tombstones occupy the west end of the cemetery. The Southern Cross of Honor can be found throughout on grave markers. The east end of the cemetery is populated with mature oak trees.

A single antebellum house is located within the study area at 749-751 Grove Street. The house was built ca. 1853. It had been converted from a single-family home to a duplex by 1915. The wood-frame dwelling is a single story with a two-story rear wing. Exterior brick side chimneys flank each end of the house.

The first major wave of development in the study area (33% of extant buildings) was between 1870 and 1899. Most of the dwellings that date to this period were built as single-family. The houses are one-to-two stories and are primarily of wood-frame construction. Italianate and Queen Anne are the most common styles, but there are other examples of Victorian-era styles represented from this period. A truly unique residence built in the study area during this time is the Y-shaped house at 834 Grove Street. Edward M. Hatcher and his son Michael Henry Hatcher acquired the blueprints for the house at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876. The house was constructed the following year and is an example of the Italianate style. The Second Empire, brick row houses (now apartments) at 800 Grove Street were also a product of this period.

The second phase of development (31%) occurred between 1900 and 1919. While some houses built during this period are true examples of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles, others are simple folk cottages adorned with detailing of Queen Anne or Colonial Revival inspiration. Four identical Colonial Revival-style detached row houses, with Queen Anne influences, dating to 1905, are located on Chestnut Place. Consistent with the previous period of development, most of the residences dating to this period were built as single-family, although there are a few duplexes.

The final wave of residential development (33%) occurred between 1919 and 1940. The Dutch Colonial and Craftsman styles became popular during this period, with examples found on Chestnut Place, Ross Street, and Grove Street. A couple of brick duplexes were built on Chestnut Place in the 1920s. Stucco was also a popular exterior cladding during this era, departing from the traditional weatherboard that is predominant in the study area.

Apartment buildings are less common in the study area, but there are a few examples, which date from the 1930s to 1940. The apartment building was a relatively novel concept for this turn-of-the-century neighborhood. Duplexes and boarding rooms within single-family dwellings were more common. The ca. 1930 Fox Apartments at 171 Holbrook Street attempts to minimize its appearance as a new building type by maintaining a single entrance and a single two-story porch. The Wyatt Apartments, built ca. 1937 on Grove Street, are of a larger scale, standing three stories tall. Local historians believe that the Classical Revival-style building was designed by Danville architect, J. Bryant Heard.

The former Sacred Heart Catholic Church at 102 Holbrook Street is located in the study area. Built ca. 1878, the simple church exhibits Italianate features, including hooded, rounded-arch windows. The one-story frame church features a central tower that bisects the primary elevation. Its arched, double-leaf front entrance is crowned by a wooden arch with a keystone.

The Midtown Market, a neighborhood grocery store at 7 Chambers Street, is the only commercial building within the study area. Constructed in 1921, the wood frame building is a single story and of residential scale. The primary elevation features a stepped wood parapet. The large front display windows are bordered above by transoms and below by tile bulkheads.

Geographically, Grove and Holbrook streets are located along high ridges. On the east side of Grove Street, lots slope down to a gully covered with thick vegetation. Concrete retaining walls are common. Brick sidewalks and granite curbing are found on Chestnut Place, Chambers Street, and the south end of Grove Street. Holbrook and Ross streets have concrete sidewalks, but still feature granite curbing in most places. The coherent streetscape contributes to a strong sense of place.

The historic resources in the study area are well maintained, overall. Although some resources have been converted from single-family dwellings to duplexes and multi-family dwellings, they retain their original character and form. Most resources retain their historic exterior cladding. Vinyl siding is the most common (less than 20 percent) non-historic exterior cladding, but a couple houses are clad with asbestos shingles. The resources within the study area, as a whole, retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Significance Statement:** Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the proposed district. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Please list all sources of information. Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

Grove Street derives its name from the dense oak, hickory, and chestnut forest that once covered the ridge northwest of Main Street. The wooded area was simply known as “The Grove” to city residents in the antebellum period.<sup>1</sup> Much of this land was owned by Danville’s first mayor, Captain James Lanier, who resided in a grand house at 770 Main Street in the Danville Historic District. The home, built in 1830, stands today as the oldest house on Main Street.

Around 1830, the Old Grove Street Cemetery was established in The Grove, which was then outside of the municipal limits. The cemetery was founded soon after the Virginia legislature mandated municipal cemeteries in 1827 and is the oldest municipal cemetery in Danville. The first known interment was of Elizabeth Royall in 1833, the same year as Danville’s incorporation as a city. Many esteemed Danville residents are buried in the cemetery, including members of the city’s first common council (Robert Ross, Robert Walker Williams, General Benjamin W.S. Cabell, and Dr. George Craghead) and three early mayors (James Lanier, Hobson Johns, and Robert W. Williams). A great number of local business leaders, doctors, and church leaders were buried in the cemetery, as well as fifteen confederate soldiers. Although the majority of those interred in the cemetery are white, an unknown number of African American slaves were buried along the Grove Street side of the cemetery, but the city later filled in this section.<sup>2</sup>

Grove Street began to develop in the decade prior to the Civil War. In 1854, it was annexed as the city expanded to the south, east, and west. The Hadley Map shows eight lots on the west side of Grove Street at the time of the annexation. One of the earliest surviving houses in the study area, 749-751 Grove Street, was built by Mr. and Mrs. Hobson Johns ca. 1853.<sup>3</sup> The Johns were prominent residents in Danville, with Mr. Johns serving as an early mayor.

After the Civil War, residential growth continued to take place south of the commercial district, along Main and Grove streets. The “old acre lots” of Main Street extended back to Grove Street on all but the 700 block, leaving the west side and north end of the street open for development.<sup>4</sup> Prominent residents of Grove Street included Edward M. Hatcher, the proprietor of a local foundry and William E. Boisseau, the city sergeant.<sup>5</sup> Early residents built grand houses in popular mid-to-late nineteenth century styles, including the Italianate style.

In 1867, the city expanded west, annexing the portion of the study area along Holbrook and Ross streets. Thomas B. Doe set the stage for development when he subdivided his large tract of land, stretching from Holbrook and Ross to Union Street, in the early 1870s. The streets in the area were laid out by 1877. Holbrook Street was named for Levi Holbrook, the founder and first headmaster of the Danville Male Academy. Established in 1817, the school stood at the end of Academy (now Chambers) Street, across from the cemetery, until it closed in 1863.<sup>6</sup> Ross Street was likely named for the Ross family, which was prominent in the early settlement of Danville. James Ross was one of the first two members of the First Presbyterian Church. His sons, John and Robert Ross, were partners in John Ross and Company, one of the first two stores in Danville.<sup>7</sup>

In 1878, the Sacred Heart Catholic Church was built at the intersection of Holbrook and Ross streets. It is significant as the first Catholic Church in Danville. Father Habets and Father James O’Farrell became its first priests after the parish was organized in 1875. The Crigler Brothers served as the contractors during the construction. In 1886, the church rectory was built on the adjacent parcel. Residential development filled in the other subdivided parcels along Holbrook and Ross streets.

At the turn of the century, a population boom occurred due to the success of Danville’s tobacco and textile industries. The number of city residents grew from 10,000 in 1890 to 19,000 in 1910.<sup>8</sup> The population increase stimulated residential development across the city. Workers associated with the tobacco and textile industries settled along Grove, Holbrook, and Ross streets. While some worked as general laborers, others held specialized positions as tobacco traders, machinists, and inspectors. Study area residents also held professional positions as bookkeepers, clerks, lawyers, merchants, teachers, salesmen, brokers, and bankers. One resident operated a boarding house out of her home at 711 Grove Street. Her boarders in 1910 included bookkeepers and a furniture salesman. A few other homes on Grove Street also housed one or two boarders.<sup>9</sup>

Chestnut Place began to develop after the turn of the century, with the addition of four detached row houses in 1905. The houses were built for Dr. E. Howe Miller, who lived at the corner of Main Street and Chestnut Place. The names of some of the first families to live on the street are Bauer, Lea, Shadrah, and Musselman. The heads of household worked as a store manager, a salesman at a drug store, a dentist, and a jewelry engraver, respectively.

Some residents in the study area were wealthy enough to afford domestic workers. In 1910, a couple of homes on Chestnut Place and Grove Street had live-in servants. In both cases, the servants were African American. Other homes most likely employed African-American women as nurses, laundresses, and cooks. African-American domestic workers generally resided on Calvary, Monroe, and Valley streets, which functioned as service streets to the white residents of Grove and Main.<sup>10</sup>

The study area continued to develop in the 1910s and 1920s. New houses filled almost all of the remaining lots. During these two decades, a school and a grocery store were established to serve residents. Grove Street High School was built at 920 Grove Street in 1916. Demand for a separate building to house high school students rose as the Robert E. Lee School on Loyal Street saw increased

enrollment. The school on Grove Street was commonly known as The Danville High School. It served as the high school until 1927, when it became the John L. Berkeley Elementary School (demolished 1973). J.M. Church established his grocery store, "Church's Grocery" on Chambers Street in December 1921. The store sold a variety of items, including fresh produce and seafood. The neighborhood store, now known as Midtown Market, retains its original appearance and has been in operation ever since.

During the Great Depression, residential construction slowed across the nation. By that point, all but a few lots in the study area had been developed. Some new houses and a few apartment buildings were built between 1930 and 1940. One apartment building was the Wyatt Apartments, built on Grove Street ca. 1937. Local historians believe that the Classical Revival-style apartment building was designed by esteemed Danville architect, J. Bryant Heard. The development of Jefferson Avenue commenced during this period, when the stucco apartment building at 17 Jefferson Avenue was constructed in the backyards of 802 and 806 Main Street, ca. 1940. When the United States entered World War II in 1941, the development of the study area was essentially complete.

#### **End Notes**

- 1The Garden Club of Danville
- 2 Mack, 10.
- 3 City Land Records
- 4 Beers Map
- 5 Beers Map
- 6 The Garden Club of Danville
- 7 Blanton, Section 8.
- 8 Pezzoni, Section 8.
- 9 United States Census
- 10 Ibid.

#### **Recommendation for Eligibility:**

The original purpose of this Preliminary Information Form was to determine the eligibility of the Grove Street area as a stand-alone historic district. After much research, the consultant determined that the Grove Street area should be incorporated into the existing Danville Historic District, due to similarities in historical development and building stock. The Grove Street area developed alongside Main Street in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The architectural character of its residential building stock relates to the residential area of the Danville Historic District, located east of Main Street. The most common building types in this section of the Danville Historic District are one and two family homes, built in popular late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century styles. While these buildings are impressive, they are simpler and of a smaller scale than the high style houses of Millionaires Row along Main Street. The Grove Street area is contiguous to the Danville Historic District, connected by Jefferson Avenue, Chestnut Place, Chambers Street, and Holbrook Street. It shares many streetscape features, such as brick sidewalks, regular setbacks, and granite curbing.

The consultant recommends that the Danville Historic District be amended to include the Grove Street area. Listed on the National Register and the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1993, the Danville Historic District nomination does not specify a period of significance or applicable criteria and areas of significance. The consultant believes that the district is locally significant under Criterion A, in the area of community development for its role in the early expansion of the City of Danville and Criterion C, in the area of Architecture as it contributes to the wide range of architectural styles popular from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century represented in the Danville Historic District. The recommended period of significance is 1830, the construction date of the Lanier House, to 1940, when the last major wave of development concluded.

## Bibliography

- Beers, F.W. Topographical Map of Danville, Pittsylvania Co., Va. Southern and Southwestern Surveying and Publishing Company: 1877. Copied by A.G. Pritchett, 1914.
- Blanton, Alison S. *Holbrook-Ross Street Historic District, National Register nomination 108-0180*. Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia, 1999.
- Fountain, Clara G. *Danville: A Pictorial History*. Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Company, 1970.
- Mack, Mary Mackenzie. *History of Old Grove Street Cemetery*. Danville, VA: The Garden Club of Danville, 1939.
- Pezzoni, J. Daniel. *Dan River Inc. Riverside Division Historic District, National Register nomination 108-0013*. Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia, 1999.
- Sanborn Insurance Company, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1887, 1886, 1890, 1894, 1898, 1899, 1904, 1910, 1915, 1920. New York, NY: Sanborn Insurance Company.
- The Garden Club of Danville and Gary Grant. *Old Grove Street Cemetery: A Walking Guide*. Danville, VA: The Garden Club of Danville, 1991.
- United States Census Bureau. 1900, 1910, 1920 Census.

**Sponsor** (Individual and/or organization, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please use a separate sheet.)

Mr. ☐ Ms. ☒ \_\_\_\_\_ City of Danville  
(Name)  
427 Patton Street, PO Box 3300 Danville VA 24543  
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip Code)  
burtotr@ci.danville.va.us 434-799-5261  
(Email Address) (Daytime telephone including area code)

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Renee Burton

Daytime Telephone: (434) 799-5261

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form)

Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☒  
Ms. ☐ Miss ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ Hill Studio  
(Name) (Firm)  
120 Campbell Avenue SW Roanoke VA 24011  
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip Code)  
ablanton@hillstudio.com 540-342-5263  
(Email Address) (Daytime telephone including area code)

Applicant's Signature:

*Alison S. Blanton*

Date:

**Notification**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Mr. ☒ Mrs. ☐ Dr. ☐  
Miss ☐ Ms. ☐ Hon. ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ Joe King City Manager  
(Name) (Position)  
Danville 427 Patton Street  
(Locality) (Address)  
Danville VA 24543 (434) 799-5100  
(City) (State) (Zip Code) (Daytime telephone including area code)

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this district.

Evaluation of the Grove Street area is being sought to determine if its historic resources should be incorporated into the existing Danville Historic District (108-0056).

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes ☒ No ☐

Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes ☐ No ☒

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